

help with operational problems. The fringe areas of large towns also have some very difficult water and sewage problems that the public health engineer may be able to eliminate by assisting in the planning activities. By careful planning, most public health problems can be eliminated before they arise. The engineer should be a member or should sit in on sessions of the community planning commission.

The same situation exists as to housing. Most of the sanitation headaches in urban areas can be eliminated by the removal or rehabilitation of substandard housing. The health departments are interested in providing good physical, mental, and moral environments for the citizens in their areas.

The public health engineer is also concerned with home safety. Through the sanitarians, nurses, and health educators, the health department has direct contact with homes and groups of individuals and therefore has an excellent opportunity to reduce home accidents. Home accidents take as great a toll of human life and suffering as do highway accidents, and most of these home accidents are

preventable. The elimination of physical hazards in the home environment is an engineering design problem.

The pollution of air is somewhat like the pollution of water. Industries and homes pour smoke, dusts, and toxic gases into the atmosphere. Odors also can create disagreeable conditions that may have an indirect bearing on the health and comfort of the individuals exposed. This is of concern to the public health engineer.

Every year we discover some other factors in the environment that affect the health of people. These are of concern to the public health engineer and sometimes are his responsibility.

The area of interest of the public health engineer is broad and varied and is not static. His is one of the most interesting and responsible positions in the field of public service. A good job well done will give the engineer a great deal of personal satisfaction and a feeling that perhaps a small piece of the world and a few of its people are better off as a result of his efforts than they otherwise would be.

## Human Behavior Patterns★

R. E. Kious\*\*

"Good morning, Ray," called Cliff Melton cheerfully as he met his friend and health department colleague, Ray Godwin. "How's everything this morning?"

\*If there is any originality in this article, it stems from a combination of the work of many other persons. A bibliography is appended, and to the authors cited therein I feel most indebted for the rich heritage; however, it must be made clear that they are in no way responsible for the manner in which their ideas are presented here.

My gratitude is expressed to the many other authors whose articles I have read but did not record.

Deep appreciation is extended to the many students of the Topeka Field Training Center who have applied these and other principles of behavior to corroborate their own results and those of the authors.

My apologies and appreciation are likewise extended to the countless people from all walks of life for their patience in answering what, in their opinion, at least, seemed stupid questions. Also to those whom I used in experiment without consent and who, I hope, have forgiven me, I extend appreciation.

\*\*Topeka, Kans., Field Training Center, CDC.

"Good morning, Cliff. Everthing's fine, thanks," Ray replied.

The two friends and co-workers walked on down the street toward the health department which was a few blocks away.

"Cliff, I wanted to ask you about that new deter...."

"Good morning, Mr. Harrison," called Cliff. "How's the little girl coming along?"

"Oh, she's doin' jus' fine, Mistah Cliff, jus' fine."

"Who's that?" asked Ray.

"That's Mr. Harrison, janitor at the Central Building. His little girl sprained her wrist last week and...."

"Hi, Mary," Cliff called before he could finish his explanation.

From across the street Mary answered his

greeting and smiled broadly.

"How many girls will you have at camp next week?" he almost shouted.

"Forty if they all make it," she called back.

Cliff's face turned serious for a moment and then brightened with, "It sounds like a big job, Mary, but I'm sure you can handle them. See you later."

"Who's that," asked Ray.

"That's Mary Linquist, a girl scout leader, she....."

"Good morning, Mr. Grey," said Cliff courteously.

"Good morning, Cliff," came an almost gruff voice from a large, formidable looking man whose stern features were supported by a somewhat aloof attitude.

"Good Heavens," exclaimed Ray, "he looks as if he eats nails for breakfast! Who in the world is he?"

"He's president of the Central National; yeah, he's really mean. Know what he does for a hobby?" Cliff asked.

"Probably makes recordings of people being boiled alive. What," asked Ray, shaking his head, "does he do?"

"He has....good morning, Mr. Eidson. He has a bird hospital, sets broken wings and legs, then nurses them until they are strong again. You certainly can't tell what a person is made of on the inside by just looking at the outside, can you?"

"You sure couldn't in this case," agreed Ray.

"It's very doubtful to me whether we could in any case," commented Cliff. "Good morning, Mrs. Heberling," he called.

The two turned into the Health Department and were presently at their desks. Cliff busily checked to see if any emergency calls might alter his planned schedule.

Ray, however, sat thoughtfully staring at his desk. Presently he looked up at Cliff and opened his mouth as if to say something, closed it again, and looked back at his desk.

The obvious struggle Ray was having within himself was nothing new. It had been going on for weeks. Now he looked up again with a determination to get whatever was bothering him off his chest.

"Cliff," he said, "I would like to talk to you for a few minutes if you have time."

"Sure," answered Cliff, "here's the dope on that new detergent you were asking about."

"It isn't that, Cliff," replied Ray very seriously now. "It's about this ability you seem to have in dealing with people. You get your work done twice as fast as I do and with a lot less trouble, too. Seems like you know everyone in town and something about what they do."

"Wait a minute now," said Cliff laughing. "I'm not that good, but I am meeting more people every day, and it is true that they do the most unexpected things to make my work easier."

"I wish I had that talent, but I guess old Dame Nature just cut me short there," sighed Ray.

"No, she didn't," Cliff quickly cut in. "Perhaps you haven't taken the time to develop that talent, but it's there. Why don't you sort of study this human behavior project with me, Ray? It's a lot of fun and pays dividends in many ways."

"I'd really like to," cried Ray eagerly, "but how do I go about it, how do I get started?"

"Well, let me tell you what got me started," Cliff said. Both men settled themselves as comfortably as straight-backed office chairs will allow and Cliff began: "A few years ago I picked up a magazine while waiting in a dentist's office and started browsing through it. I can't even remember the name of the magazine or the article or the author. I read that 90 percent of the people who lose their jobs lose them because they can't get along with people. I always thought people lost their jobs because they didn't know their business. I checked these figures in other sources and found there was some range but most of the figures were near the 90 percent mark.

"While checking this I ran across other statistics indicating that the temperament of nearly all jobs is 85 percent getting along with people and 15 percent technical ability.

"These figures were also substantiated by other authorities, but all hastened to add that each is an inseparable part of the other. That is, getting along with people isn't enough; we must definitely and thoroughly have the other 15 percent. On the other hand, this 15 percent is of little use if we are unable to apply it."

"Here's another figure that won't be at all new to you, Ray. You've heard it many times from many of our leaders in public health."

"I know what you're going to say," Ray chimed in, "that about 90 percent of our work is educating the people with whom we work as well as educating the public."

"Right you are," agreed Cliff, "and if we are going to do any educational work, we certainly need to get along with the people we are trying to educate unless, of course, we want to try to dump that responsibility on the courts.

"You know, Ray, I've tried to think of some part of our job that doesn't involve an individual or a group of people, and, to save my life, I can't. These statistics I, more or less, stumbled onto, and the fact that we are always working with people set me to thinking. I decided to learn what I could about human behavior, but I was really apprehensive about it. I figured all this behavior stuff was only for the psychologist and psychiatrist. I was lucky, however, for on the first trip to the library I picked up a good book on human behavior. In it I read that human conduct operates according to definite laws and is orderly—that is, one may expect similar responses to similar situations in most people. For instance, if you went out on the street and kicked the first 10 people you met a lusty blow on the shins, you would be well assured they wouldn't like it. They would all react similarly in that they would all be angry. The same thing is true with what you say. Tell these 10 people they look stupid and repulsive and they aren't going to like it; or tell someone outside of this group you think that of them, and I'll wager you 10 to 1 they will find it out, and they still aren't going to like it.

"About the first principle I learned in getting along with people is that you must never do anything to lower a person's self-esteem if you wish to make and keep a friend. An individual spends nearly all of his time thinking about himself when he isn't on special projects. You and I do this, and so do all other people. Another thing, did you know you would rather be you than any other person in the world? Now wait a minute, let me explain that. Sure you would like to look like Clark Gable, sing like Bing Crosby, and fight like Joe Louis. Yes, you would like to have all these attributes, but you would still rather be you. The point is that every person you meet would rather be himself than anyone else; so if he thinks that much of himself, it is obvious we should never do anything to indicate that we have a lower opinion of that self. We hurt people in a hundred different ways—little satirical things we say or insinuate, or even the manner in which we say things. You see this ego, or self, is a

very delicate apparatus—far more sensitive than the finest radar. It picks up not only sound, but looks and impressions too. This ego of ours has the oddest habit of selecting things and recording them—things often not having the remotest connection. Our sensitive ego is vigorously activated by the slightest suspicion of potential harm. Once damaged, even slightly, it turns the entire attitude of the individual into that of resentment, a most unproductive form of creative thinking.

"You know, Ray, while we are thinking so much about ourselves, we also are always thinking about what we want. This we carry over into our work in that we are always thinking about what we want the other fellow to do, and we give little thought to what he may want to do. It seems to me we must be interested in what the other fellow wants and do what we can to help him get it. I have found that it isn't too hard to get many things we want if we take time to get the other fellow to want them too. Emerson, the poet, was trying to get his calf into the barn one time. He pulled and tugged on the halter while the hired man, with his shoulder to the calf's rump, pushed for all he was worth. The calf, with the exasperating stubbornness and awkwardness possessed by calves alone, braced his forefeet and resisted all endeavor. Emerson's plump and pleasant housekeeper watched the proceeding with grim interest. Finally, she poured milk over her fingers, stuck them into the calf's mouth, and backed slowly into the barn with the calf eagerly following. Well, the calf got what he wanted and Emerson got what he wanted, but until the housekeeper came along neither was sure of what the other wanted. Most people are just about like that, it seems to me.

"People need nourishment for their self-esteem, Ray. If you find someone has done something well, be sincere and hearty in your praise. Don't flatter though, because it is too easy to see through it, and the so-called 'flannel mouth' loses friends rapidly.

"Criticism is feared by everyone and this fear probably is second only to the fear of poverty. Criticism is also dangerous because it wounds a man's self-esteem and, of course, it is futile because it puts one on the defensive and makes him try to justify himself. There is nothing that so kills a man's ambition as direct criticism. Call attention to errors indirectly,

give a man an incentive to work, and allow every person to save face.

"Ray, I have made it a habit never to check any establishment without first finding something I can genuinely praise the manager for. I'll admit it is sometimes hard to find, but even an old shack has enough cracks and holes in it to make ventilation unusually good. Another habit I have formed is that of never considering the health problem the first part of my job. The fellow who runs the place, who spends the money, and who can make the work of the inspector easy commands my first attention. If I have him on my side, my worries are over. Fortunately he reacts according to definite patterns so I proceed along those lines."

"Cliff," Ray interrupted, "just this morning I heard you call Mr. Sellers and tell him you would be over at 9:30 to do an inspection. What in the world kind of business is that, letting him know when you are coming? You won't be able to catch him at anything, and the place will probably be all shined up."

"Mr. Sellers and I have a mutual respect for each other and for our respective professions. We make appointments regularly and set aside time for them," Cliff said. "No more of this 'cops and robbers' stuff for me. I used to stop in when I knew the managers least expected me. Of course, I found things wrong and I really jumped on them. Then, while their self-esteem screamed in anguish and their attitude curdled and slowly congealed into a solid block of resentment I tried to explain what I wanted and why. Well, it just won't work. Now, I know what the individual manager hopes to do, and he knows what I hope to do, and together we strive toward a mutual goal; I try to do things for him and he does things for me. Every manager and I automatically become partners after I explain that we're in this together, and believe me, it works much better.

"Ray, it's almost 9:15 and we've got to get along. I've only mentioned a couple of behavior patterns that all people seem to have, but that may be enough for a start. Meantime try to develop a genuine interest in all other people you meet. You will be surprised how interesting it is once you get started. Start conscientiously trying to remember peoples' names. Don't tell me that you can't; I've tried it, and I know that anyone can remember names if he wants to.

"Here's a list of books and there are many

more in the library. In these you will find definite behavior patterns outlined.

"Let's ask the boss if we can't spend a couple of hours each week discussing these things, sort of like we do new milk stone removers and new cleaners.

"One last thing, Ray. Please don't make the same mistake I did in studying people. I was always looking for their defects and trying to get them to change their habits and attitudes, trying to get them to practice the principles we have been talking about. It was a long time before it occurred to me that perhaps I might have some shortcomings. Now everything I learn about human behavior I apply to myself in seeking self-improvement. The pathology of the behavior of others I leave to their doctor and psychiatrist.

"It's odd how much other people improved their behavior when I improved mine."

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